

PB11 – Integrating the gender dimension into research content for research performing organisations: How to lead?

March 2017

For those countries identified as having no measures but above EU average levels of implementation.¹

This policy brief provides evidence-based, concrete recommendations for national level policy makers on how to integrate the gender dimension into research content in RPOs.²

Why is this important?

Integrating the gender dimension into the research process and content means integrating sex and gender analysis into research in all of its phases.³ It improves the quality, validity and relevance of research and its outcomes that take into account the realities of men and women equally.⁴ For example in the field of health, both men and women need to be included in clinical trials for drug development. Integrating sex and gender analysis into the research process saves human lives and prevents the waste of economic resources. It also helps to ensure that research reflects the needs of a diverse population thereby increasing the relevance of its outcomes.⁵ It may also contribute to opening up more market opportunities by diversifying the experiences and expertise in the innovation process.⁶

The European Commission's major research funding programme Horizon 2020 (2014 -2020) prioritises the integration of gender/sex analysis in research and innovation (R&I) content as one of its main objectives to improve greater gender equality in science.⁷ Member states have been invited to create a legal and policy environment and provide incentives to strengthen the gender dimension in research programmes.⁸ Various national initiatives have been already undertaken to encourage greater sensitivity and the integration of sex and gender analysis in science knowledge and practice. These include developing and providing support for:

- policies and strategies promoting the integration and analysis of sex/gender as research variables and determinant of outcomes
- research funding programmes aimed at advancing cross-cutting impact of sex/gender aware and responsive research
- guidelines and training materials for researchers and research managers
- guidelines/ training for assessment and evaluation of gender as component of excellence and impact in research proposals and projects
- recommendations and/ or models for university STEM curricular development and researcher training in relevant fields.⁹

The results of the ERA survey 2014 indicate that on average 44%¹⁰ of RPOs which are ERA compliant¹¹ include the promotion of gender dimension in research content.¹²

What is the extent of the problem?

This policy brief addresses specifically those countries that have no national measures to promote the gender dimension in research content. At the same time more than 44% (EU average)¹³ of their research performing organisations include such a gender dimension in research content. In concrete terms this "How to Lead" -brief targets specifically Belgium, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Portugal and Romania.¹⁴

In general progress to date however has been slow and difficult to measure.¹⁵ The ERA Facts and Figures 2014 reports that whilst more countries are including the gender dimension in research content and programmes – the level of implementation is 'insufficiently supported'.¹⁶ The share of institutions doing so also varies significantly amongst Member States. Of those countries identified as having above average levels of implementation without measures – the percentage of RPOs that include the gender dimension in research content ranges from 58% in Belgium to 78% in Estonia.¹⁷

What are the options?

National level policymakers have real leverage to encourage the integration of the gender dimension into research content, and into higher education curricular, as they can set research and funding priorities and targets.¹⁸

In Italy the national parliament adopted legislation in 2013 to regulate the inclusion of gender medicine into teaching, research and healthcare as part of the national health policy – as well as promoting its adoption in regional and provincial health policy.¹⁹ Article four encourages private and state universities to introduce modules in gender medicine as part of degree programmes in medicine and surgery, and specialization courses in specific fields of medicine. An interdisciplinary approach from a gender medicine perspective is promoted through regular training courses, masters and PhDs in gender medicine.²⁰ It also sets up a gender medicine monitoring committee to collate, co-ordinate and share epidemiological and clinical data to achieve equal rights to health care.²¹

In France the CNRS has defined interdisciplinary research and the integration of the gender dimension (including in fields outside social science and humanities) as a strategic priority. In 2014 CNRS included this objective in a Gender Action Plan – and the strategy runs through various programmes. CNRS has also proposed the inclusion of gendered perspectives into the National Strategy for

Research adopted by the ministry where specific measures to promote and disseminate gender research and gender curricular in French universities are defined.²²

Recommendations

- Consider the potential need for integrating the sex/gender dimension and a gender budgeting approach to define research/ funding priorities whilst allocating resources to national granting agencies, universities and research projects.²³
- Ensure that the sex/gender dimension in research content is taken into account and encouraged in national research programmes, from programme design, throughout implementation and evaluation.²⁴
- Encourage the inclusion of the sex/gender dimension into different research topics at the outset and ensure it is dealt with systematically. This is an important part of the research process, which will determine whether or not sex/gender is a relevant factor.²⁵
- Develop a systematic method of assessing the sex/gender dimension in study design and project impact.²⁶
- Make available funding and resources for researchers to further investigate the sex/gender dimensions of their research.²⁷
- Make available gender equality funding to develop teaching on integrating gender into specific disciplines (i.e. health) or establishing a database of gender research contents to supports potential gender researchers.²⁸
- Allocate resources to raise awareness and carry out training for researchers, evaluators and management (top and middle) to promote a gender sensitive research- including integrating it in PhD training curricular and the development of guidelines.²⁹
- Share and promote new policy approaches and practices introduced by RPOs that are successfully integrate the sex/gender dimension.³⁰

Further Reading

Further, in-depth reading concerning the integration of the gender dimension into research content for research performing organisations is available through the following three publications: the Gender-Net *Compendium of national initiatives on the integration of the gender dimensions in research contents*³¹, the report by the League of European Research Universities (LERU) *Gendered Research and Innovation: Integrating Sex and Gender Analysis into the Research Process* (see footnote 15) and the *Gendered Innovations* project (see footnote 3).

[The GenPORT Gender Dimension in Research Content Research Performing Organisations \(RPOs\) Online Discussion](#)

- [1] Please see 'Gender and Science Policy Briefs: From "Where to start" to "How to innovate": An Introduction', for a description of the methodology used. Available at:
http://www.genderportal.eu/sites/default/files/resource_pool/pb_introduction_.pdf
- [2] According to the ERA, a research performing organisation (RPO) encompasses any organisation conducting public research – specifically research with a 'public mission' (DG Research and Innovation, 2013).
- [3] Schiebinger, L., Klinge, I., Sánchez de Madariaga, I., Paik, H. Y., Schraudner, M., and Stefanick, M. (Eds.) (2011-2015). Gendered Innovations in Science, Health & Medicine, Engineering and Environment. Available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/research/gendered-innovations/>.
- [4] European Commission, (2015a). ERA Facts and Figures 2014, Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union, p34.
- [5] European Commission, (2012b). Structural change in research institutions: Enhancing excellence, gender equality and efficiency in research and innovation, Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union, p.13.
- [6] For an overview of gendered innovations please see <http://genderedinnovations.stanford.edu/what-is-gendered-innovations.html>
- [7] European Commission, (2014d). Guidance on Gender Equality in Horizon 2020, V1, February 2014.
- [8] European Commission, (2012a). A Reinforced European Research Area: Partnership for Excellence and Growth, COM (2012) 392, p12.
- [9] These categories are taken from the classification of national initiatives on the integration of the gender dimension in research contents developed by the Gender-Net Project.
- [10] It should be noted that these figures concern RPOs which answered the ERA survey in 2014, which employ 515 000 researchers (around 20% of total EU researchers).
- [11] ERA Compliant is defined as organisations which are implementing some or all of the ERA actions with high intensity. European Commission, (2015a). ERA Facts and Figures 2014, Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union, p 10.
- [12] European Commission, (2015a). ERA Facts and Figures 2014, Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union, p33.
- [13] It should be noted that these figures concern RPOs which answered the ERA survey in 2014, which employ 515 000 researchers (around 20% of total EU researchers).
- [14] European Commission, (2015a). ERA Facts and Figures 2014, Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union. We recalculated the groups presented on p34- taking into consideration the percentage of RPOs that answered 'yes' as a percentage of all applicable organisations – and whether or not measures were identified. Please note that the sample for the ERA Survey was not randomly selected and the results have not been weighted due to a lack of substantiated information about the sample frame and the whole population of RPOs. "This means it is not possible to produce inferential statistics about the wider population". See Figures, 2015, Handbook p111.
- [15] League of European Research Universities, (LERU), (2015). Gendered Research and Innovation: Integrating Sex and Gender Analysis into the Research Process, p13.
- [16] European Commission, (2015a). ERA Facts and Figures 2014, Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union, p28.
- [17] It should be noted that these figures concern RPOs who answered the ERA survey in 2014, which employs 515, 000 researchers (around 20% of total EU researchers).
- [18] League of European Research Universities, (LERU), (2015). Gendered Research and Innovation: Integrating Sex and Gender Analysis into the Research Process.
- [19] League of European Research Universities, (LERU), (2015). Gendered Research and Innovation: Integrating Sex and Gender Analysis into the Research Process. p16.
- [20] <http://genderedinnovations.stanford.edu/policy/ItalianNationalGenderMedicineBill2013.pdf>
- [21] Ibid.
- [22] Gender-Net, (2015a). Compendium of national initiatives on the integration of the gender dimension in research contents, p70.
- [23] League of European Research Universities, (LERU), (2015). Gendered Research and Innovation: Integrating Sex and Gender Analysis into the Research Process.
- [24] Pollitzer, E., Buitendijk, S., Hermann, C., Mühlensbruch, B., & Schiebinger, (2015). On Lessons Learnt for Work Programme 2016-2017, Integrating Gender in Horizon 2020, Pan European Networks: Science and Technology.
- [25] League of European Research Universities, (LERU), (2015). Gendered Research and Innovation: Integrating Sex and Gender Analysis into the Research Process, p18.
- [26] Gender Summit 4 Europe 2014 GS7- See: <http://gender->

- summit.com/images/GS7_Speakers/GS7_ppts/GS7EU_Programme_Public_SML.pdf
- [27] Pollitzer, E., Buitendijk, S., Hermann, C., Mühlenbruch, B., and Schiebinger, (2015). On Lessons Learnt for Work Programme 2016-2017, Integrating Gender in Horizon 2020, Pan European Networks: Science and Technology.
- [28] Regitz-Zagrosek, (2013)cited in Gender Summit North America, (2013). Diversity Fueling Excellence in Research and Innovation Conference Report, p29.
- [29] European Commission, (2013b). Recommendations on the Implementation of the ERA Communication: Report of the Expert Group 2013, Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union, p43.
- [30] For example, VTT, Franhofer, CESAER, CERN, and AIC. Gender Summit, (2014) Report From The 2014 European Gender Summit To The European Commission And European Parliament. See: http://gender-summit.com/images/GS4_EU_2014_Report.pdf
- [31] Gender-Net, (2015a). Compendium of national initiatives on the integration of the gender dimension in research contents. Available at: <http://bit.ly/29yqOTY>